

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1361

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

COMUSFORAZ

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I L L PONTA DELGADA 0472

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: AZOREAN SITUATION; VIEWS OF GENERAL MAGALHAES

1. IN CONVERSATION DECEMBER 16 GENERAL ALTINO MAGALHAES SAID THAT THE

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WAS DISCUSSING THAT DAY THE INCREASE OF POWER FOR

THE JUNTA REGINAL. HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE JUNTA WOULD BE GIVEN MINISTERIAL POWERS. HE REMARKED THAT THE JUNTA ALWAYS HAD MADE WHAT-EVER DECISIONS NECESSARY REGARDLESS OF THE FORMAL POWERS IT HAD AND THAT THE GOP HAD NEVER OBJECTED TO ONE OF THE DECISIONS.

2. ALTHOUGH THERE HAD NOT YET BEEN TIME FOR PEOPLE IN THE AZORES OR LISBON TO STUDY IN DEPTH THE DRAFT STATUTE OF AUTONOMY, GENERAL MAGALHAES FORESAW NO MAJOR OBJECTION TO IT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT IT HAD BEEN WRITTEN BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO PARTIES (PS AND PPD) WHICH HAVE A MAJORITY IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. THE GENERAL SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION IN PORTUGAL HAD BECOME TOO CONCENTRATED IN LISBON AND THAT DECENTRALIZATION WAS NEEDED FOR ALL OF PORTUGAL. AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES WAS PART OF THIS DECENTRALIZATION

CARRIED TO A GREATER DEGREE.

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3. THE GENERAL WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE AZORES. HE THOUGHT THE DIVISIONS NOW APPARENT BETWEEN SAO MIGUEL AND TERCEIRA WOULD BE OVERCOME WITH TIME. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE JUNTA COULD NOT ACCOMPLISH EVERYTHING OVERNIGHT AND THAT MOST PROBLEMS WOULD TAKE TIME

TO RESOLVE.

4. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT AZOREANS' THOUGHTS ON BASE NEGOTIATIONS, GENERAL MAGALHAES SAID AZOREANS WANT A LOT, BUT THERE ARE NO CONCRETE PROPOSALS AND THE QUESTION HAS NEVER BEEN DISCUSSED FORMALLY.

5. GENERAL MAGALHAES BROUGHT UP THE RECENT PRESS REPORTS THAT HE IS A CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT. HE STATED HE IS NOT INTERESTED IN THE JOB

, AND HE THINKS THE NEXT PRESIDENT SHOULD BE A CIVILIAN. HE ALSO FAVORS

A WITHDRAWAL OF THE MILITARY FROM POLITICS AND BELIEVES THIS POSITION WILL PREVAIL WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES.

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